

REMARKS

Claims 1, 6, 7, 13, and 28 have been amended. Claims 2, 8, 19-20 and 29 have been canceled. Claims 1, 3-7, 9-18, 21-28, and 30-33 remain pending in this application, with claims 1, 7, 13, and 28 being the only independent claims. Claims 7-14, 17-19, 21, and 23-33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,697,695 (Kurihara). Claims 1-6, 15-16, and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Kurihara in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0164684 (Chen). Claim 20 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Kurihara in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,224,047 (Kitagawa).

Rejection of claims 7-14, 17-19, 21, 23-33 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

The Office Action states that Kurihara teaches all of Applicant's recited elements. Applicant disagrees.

Independent claim 7 has been amended to recite, inter alia, a method for outputting fault messages from a number of spatially distributed production units forming at least one group of production units that includes "generating a method fault signal by at least one of said production units", "wirelessly supplying the method fault signal to a data receiving unit", "and visually displaying the method fault signal with a lamp in the data receiving unit", which Kurihara fails to teach or suggest. Support for the claim amendment can be found in Fig. 1, and paragraphs [0024]-[0025] of Applicant's specification.

Kurihara discloses a laser device management system, which includes a laser control apparatus 10, which controls a laser device 2 and monitors a state of the laser device 2 (col. 8, lines 47-51 of Kurihara). The laser control apparatus 10 and laser device 2 of Kurihara are part of a semiconductor fabrication apparatus 60. A monitor terminal 20 receives data indicating the

state of the laser device 2 and transmits the data to a server device 30 which processes the data and outputs the data to a display terminal 40 (col. 8, lines 51-56). Kurihara further discloses that two semiconductor fabrication apparatus 60 may be connected to one monitor and that a plurality of semiconductor fabrication units 311 can be in one factory (see Figs. 11 and 22 of Kurihara).

In contrast to Applicant's recited lamp, the display monitor disclosed by Kurihara has an extremely limited visual field. In other words, a factory worker/supervisor must walk up to monitor and read it. If a fault message is displayed on the monitor of Kurihara, and the factory worker is somewhere out of reading distance, the factory worker will not be able to see the fault message. However, with Applicant's recited lamps, as described above, the factory worker is able to easily and immediately see the visually displayed fault signal over great distances as long as the lamp is within the factory worker's field of view/line of sight.

Accordingly, Kurihara fails to disclose visually displaying the method fault signal with a lamp in the data receiving unit, as recited in Applicant's amended claim 7.

In view of the foregoing, Kurihara fails to teach or suggest the subject matter recited in Applicant's independent claim 7. Accordingly, independent claim 7 is not anticipated Kurihara under 35 U.S.C. §102(e).

Independent claim 7 further recites "forwarding said method fault signal to a fault alarm box, and supplying a fault message from said fault alarm box to one or more data receiving devices configured for receiving and indicating fault messages". Kurihara also fails to teach or suggest these limitations because Kurihara fails to disclose both "wirelessly supplying the method fault signal to a data receiving unit", and "forwarding said method fault signal to a fault alarm box, and supplying a fault message from said fault alarm box to one or more data receiving devices configured for receiving and indicating fault messages".

Claims 13 and 28 recite limitations similar to independent claim 7, and are, therefore, deemed to be patentably distinct over Kurihara for at least those reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 7.

Claim 29 has been canceled. Claims 8-12, 14, 17-19, 21, 23-27, and 30-33, which depend from independent claims 7 and 28 incorporate all of the limitations of the respective independent claim and are therefore deemed to be patentably distinct over Kurihara for at least those reasons discussed above with respect to independent claims 7, 13, and 28.

Rejection of claims 1-6, 15-16, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action states that the combination of Kurihara and Chen teaches all of Applicant's recited elements. Applicant disagrees.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite, inter alia, a fault message system that includes "at least one data receiving unit in communication with the fault alarm box, the at least one data receiving unit comprising a lamp, the at least one data receiving unit being configured for wirelessly receiving and indicating fault signals, the lamp being configured for visually displaying the fault signals". Support for the claim amendment can be found in Fig. 1, and paragraphs [0024]-[0025] of Applicant's specification.

As previously discussed in detail above with respect to Applicant's amended independent claim 13, Kurihara fails to teach or suggest (1) that both a fault alarm box and a data receiving unit receive the fault signals generated by production units and (2) that the data receiving unit comprises a lamp, where the lamp is configured for visually displaying the fault signals, as also now recited in Applicant's amended independent claim 1.

Chen discloses a handheld communicator that wirelessly interfaces or communicates with individual devices in a process control system, such as field devices, controllers, etc., to wirelessly perform monitoring, maintenance, configuration, and control activities with respect to those devices. The wireless handheld communicator of Chen includes a housing adapted for handheld operation, a processing unit disposed within the housing, a computer readable memory disposed within the housing and coupled to the processing unit and a display, a keypad, and a radio frequency transceiver. The handheld communicator of Chen may be adapted to communicate with a host system to receive information needed to communicate with various field devices in the process plant and may then be used to wirelessly communicate with each of the various field devices directly while in close proximity to the field devices to perform monitoring and configuration activities with respect to the field devices. Thereafter, information obtained from the field devices may be wirelessly communicated to the host system or to a repository, such as a data historian or a configuration database (see abstract of Chen).

In other words, for the system of Chen to work, the user must be in possession of the wireless handheld communicator. Further, to obtain any information about the monitored devices, the user must be in possession of the wireless handheld communicator and looking at the display. If the user of the device of Chen does not purposely look at the display, the user will not know what the status of the system is.

Therefore, Chen also fails to teach or suggest “at least one data receiving unit in communication with the fault alarm box, the at least one data receiving unit comprising a lamp, the at least one data receiving unit being configured for wirelessly receiving and indicating fault signals, the lamp being configured for visually displaying the fault signals”, as recited in Applicant’s amended claim 1.

In contrast to Kurihara and Chen, Applicant's recited invention includes a data receiving unit that includes a lamp, and the lamp is configured for visually displaying the fault signals. Thus, a worker/supervisor on the factory floor is not only able to see the visually displayed fault signals from anywhere on the factory floor, the worker does not have to be actively looking for the visually displayed fault signal. The recited visually displayed fault signal need only appear within the workers field of view/line of sight to draw the worker's attention to the fact that a fault has occurred. The worker does not need to constantly monitor a computer display as with Kurihara, or be in possession of a wireless handheld communicator and view a display as with Chen.

Furthermore, the combination of Kurihara and Chen fails to teach or suggest "a fault alarm box configured for receiving the fault signals and forwarding fault messages" and "at least one data receiving unit being configured for wirelessly receiving and indicating the fault signals", as expressly recited in independent claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, Kurihara and Chen, whether taken alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the subject matter recited in Applicant's amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, independent claim 1 is patentable over Kurihara and Chen under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

Claim 2 has been canceled. Claims 3-6, which depend from independent claim 1, incorporate all of the limitations of independent claim 1 and are therefore deemed to be patentably distinct over Kurihara and Chen for at least those reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 1.

As previously discussed, Kurihara does not teach or suggest the invention recited in Applicant's amended independent claim 13.

Because Kurihara fails to teach or suggest the subject matter recited in independent claim 13 and because Chen fails to teach or suggest any elements of independent claim 13 that Kurihara is missing, the addition of Chen to the reference combination fails to remedy the above-described deficiencies of Kurihara.

Claims 15-16, and 22, which depend from independent claim 13, incorporate all of the limitations of independent claim 13 and are therefore deemed to be patentably distinct over Kurihara and Chen for at least those reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 13.

Rejection of claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action states that the combination of Kurihara and Kitagawwa teaches all of Applicant's recited elements.

Kurihara has been previously discussed and does not teach or suggest the invention recited in Applicant's independent claim 13.

Because Kurihara fails to teach or suggest the subject matter recited in independent claim 13 and because Kitagawwa fails to teach or suggest any elements of independent claim 13 that Kurihara is missing, the addition of Kitagawwa to the reference combination fails to remedy the above-described deficiencies of Kurihara.

Claim 20, which depends from independent claim 13, incorporates all of the limitations of independent claim 13 and is therefore deemed to be patentably distinct over Kurihara and Kitagawwa for at least those reasons discussed above with respect to independent claim 13

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections, and allowance of all pending claims is respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner have any comments, questions, suggestions, or objections, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned in order to facilitate reaching a resolution of any outstanding issues.

Respectfully submitted,

COHEN PONTANI LIEBERMAN & PAVANE LLP

By /Alfred W. Froeblich/
Alfred W. Froeblich
Reg. No. 38,887
551 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1210
New York, New York 10176
(212) 687-2770

Dated: May 23, 2008